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WESTERN KENTUCKY STATE COLLEGE

Bowling Green, Kentucky

Founders Day is observed annually at Western Kentucky State College. The following address was the highlight of the Founders Day program held in Van Meter Auditorium, November 16, 1960. Copies of this address are being sent to a special mailing list.

The address was delivered by Dr. Finley C. Grise, a member of the Western faculty from 1913 to 1959 and Dean of the College from 1927 to 1959.

FOUNDERS DAY ADDRESS

November 16, 1960

Western Kentucky State College

Throughout the history of civilized society, people of all races have taken note of the deeds of their heroes and leaders and have endeavored to perpetuate the memory of those men and women through monuments of various kinds and by the observance of certain days set apart in their honor.

This is Founders Day at Western — a day designated by our Board of Regents, 30 years ago, as a time when we should pay special tribute to our great founder, H. H. Cherry, and to others who have made large contributions to the growth and development of our College.

I consider it a privilege and a high honor to speak to you for a few moments concerning these founders and builders as we pause to remember with gratitude those who have given their "full measure of devotion" to this Institution across the years. It is most fitting that on this day we honor them with appropriate ceremonies, resolving that their work, their sacrifice, and their dedication shall not have been in vain and pledging anew our loyalty and our faith.

I have had the joy and good fortune to know personally most of the founders and builders of Western during its entire history of more than a half century, including H. H. Cherry, whose name leads all the rest and whose statue stands in front of the building

named in his honor. May I suggest that you go and stand before this monument occasionally, noting the dignity, the poise, the strong face; feeling something of the spirit of the man portrayed in this work of art, and being thankful that he was the founder and for 45 years the great president and leader of this Institution. In this connection I should also like to mention Dr. Paul L. Garrett, Dr. Cherry's successor, who for seventeen years gave his very best as the capable and devoted president, leader, and builder of Western. And of course I have known our present leader from the time he came here as a college freshman not too many years ago. Today we also salute with pride and appreciation, President Kelly Thompson, one of the great builders of our College.

As a student I knew this School when it was a two-year normal, with one classroom building, when it had a faculty of only a few more than a dozen members and a student body not much larger than our graduating classes today. But it was an excellent school, even in those days — superior in most of the qualities that go to make a fine institution of higher learning. To see something of its physical growth and increased enrollment, look about you; but what you see does not tell the whole story. This history is to be found also in a half century and more of the devotion, the contributions, and the sacrifices of many hundreds of men and women who have lived and loved and served on this Hill, whose voices and faces many of us still recall, and whose influence shall not soon pass away. They were leaders and builders. You will also find the answer to what has made our school great in the lives of the thousands of graduates who, through earnestness of purpose, hard work,

loyalty, and active participation in its programs, added something to the College, left it better than it was when they came, and have gone forth to carry the message of "life more life" to all parts of the nation.

To all these whom I have mentioned and a multitude of other friends of the School, men and women who were founders and builders, we pay tribute today for their gifts of self, service, and sacrifice. We look back and recount, remember, and rejoice that we may keep our memories green, our minds responsive, and our hearts warm with gratitude. We must pause again and again to remember, lest we forget our heritage and our debt to the past; lest we lose our direction; lest we forget our purposes and weaken our standards; in order that our ideals may not become vague, and that the spirit which has above all else made Western great may not cease to be a reality.

We look back only that we may go forward. In order to go forward, we must know our College — its history, its purposes, its achievements, and its ideals. This story is challenging, exciting, and dramatic. No one can love or be truly loyal to anything which he does not know and understand; yet we must have more than understanding, even more than appreciation. There must be the desire and the will to recognize the achievements, to build on the foundations of the past, and to strive toward even greater and greater things during the years that are ahead. **You**, and **you**, and **you**, and those who come after you, must leave this College better than you and they found it, if it is to fulfill its mission; if it is to realize its high and noble destiny.

Our leaders and builders have erected here a magnificent physical plant, but long after the brick and stone and mortar of these buildings have crumbled and other bigger and better structures have risen in their places, I like to indulge the hope that those who climb these heights will still feel that "the spirit makes the master," and that the only really good reason for a college is that people may have vision, and that they may experience the more abundant life.

I would challenge you who are here today to be builders, that going from this holy Hill you leave it better than you found it, and that the places to which you go and the fields in which you labor will be better because you were here. This means work, hard work; it means consecrated and intelligent effort. The achievements which I suggest cannot be attained by the permanently weak, the inefficient, the disloyal, the selfish, or the "fuzzy" minded. Littleness, cheapness, selfishness, and triviality have no place in the mind; and the hearts of those who live on this high place. There is really no place on this Hill for persons who are satisfied with the "pretty good" or with their "second best." It is a time when all men and women everywhere are called upon to live completely, high-mindedly, and dynamically.

And so assembled here on our Hill—a hill that has gathered to itself much of the meaning and many of the messages of all the other great hills of all time—with the voices of tens of thousands of students of other days ringing in our ears, with the call of thousands of graduates urging us on, and with the memory of hundreds of leaders and builders who have

lived and loved and labored to make this Hilltop great in our minds and hearts, with all the earnestness which I possess, and with all the sincerity of my soul, I would again challenge **you** the students, and **you** the faculty, new and old, to strive with all your might to accomplish even greater things than those who have preceded you have achieved, to the end that this College may continue to be true to its traditions and purposes; that it may uphold and improve its standards and enlarge its opportunities; that it may ever be a college from which the ideal of "life more life" shall not depart. In this moment may we together rededicate our best to the tasks of tomorrow; may we utter a silent prayer that this Hill may continue to be a place where learning and the love of learning find a welcome and a home, and that it shall always have the power to stimulate the mind; and feed the souls of those who come seeking the larger and better life.

And finally, gathered here on our Hill, College Heights, with its memories, traditions, and achievements crowding in upon us; with faces turned toward tomorrow; with faith, with hope, with spirits lifted up without fear, let us together look forward to and work for a greater Western and a new world, a better world, a world of fine and lofty promise.

With one of the best student bodies ever assembled on this campus, with a loyal and efficient faculty, and with a vigorous and dedicated leadership, I express this faith, these hopes, and these challenges with much optimism and with great assurance.